

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A system for subjective evaluation of a vehicle design within a virtual environment using virtual reality comprising:

a scaleable physical property representative of the vehicle design, wherein the physical property is adjusted according to a scale ratio for an evaluator of the vehicle design, wherein the scale ratio is a ratio between a predetermined dimension of the evaluator and a predetermined dimension of a member of a target population;

a computer system for digitally creating a virtual environment having a virtual human immersed within the virtual environment, wherein the virtual environment includes the vehicle design and the virtual human virtually represents a scaled evaluator;

a motion capture system for sensing a motion of the evaluator and communicating the sensed motion of the evaluator to the computer system, so that the motion of the evaluator controls the motion of the virtual human in the virtual environment; and

a virtual reality display mechanism operatively communicating with the computer system, for providing the evaluator a view of the virtual environment while evaluating the vehicle design.

2. (ORIGINAL) The system of claim 1 wherein the motion capture system includes an instrumented glove worn by the evaluator for sensing motion of the evaluator's hand.

3. (ORIGINAL) The system of claim 1 wherein the motion capture system includes magnetic spatial tracking sensors located on the evaluator for sensing motion of the evaluator's full body.

4. (ORIGINAL) The system of claim 1 wherein the virtual reality display mechanism includes a head mounted display mechanism worn by the evaluator for seeing the virtual environment through an eye of the virtual human.

5. (ORIGINAL) The system of claim 1 wherein the computer system includes at least one video terminal displaying a view of the virtual environment as seen through an eye of the virtual human.

6. (ORIGINAL) The system of claim 1 wherein the computer system includes at least one video terminal displaying a third person view of the virtual human immersed within the virtual environment.

7. (CANCELED)

8. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method of subjective evaluation of a vehicle design within a virtual environment using virtual reality, said method comprising the steps of:

preparing an evaluator of a vehicle design for immersion as a virtual human in the virtual environment, wherein the virtual environment is created within a computer system and includes the vehicle design;

determining a scale ratio and range of a target population for the evaluator, wherein the scale ratio is a ratio between a predetermined dimension of the evaluator and a predetermined dimension of a member of the target population;

preparing an adjustable property using the vehicle design and the scale ratio;

growing the virtual human within the virtual environment to virtually represent a scaled evaluator;

aligning the virtual human in the virtual environment with the evaluator and the property,

performing the evaluation of the vehicle design by the evaluator; and

using the evaluation of the vehicle design in the design of the vehicle.

9. (ORIGINAL) A method as set forth in claim 8 wherein said step of preparing an evaluator includes the step of measuring an anthropometric dimension of the evaluator.

10. (ORIGINAL) A method as set forth in claim 8 wherein said step of preparing an evaluator includes the step of positioning a motion capture system on the evaluator for sensing a motion of the evaluator and communicating the sensed motion of the evaluator to the computer system, so that the motion of the evaluator controls the motion of the virtual human in the virtual environment.

11. (ORIGINAL) A method as set forth in claim 8 wherein said step of preparing an evaluator includes providing the evaluator with a virtual reality display mechanism operatively communicating with the computer system, for providing the evaluator a view of the virtual environment while evaluating the vehicle design.

12. (ORIGINAL) A method as set forth in claim 8 wherein the step of preparing an adjustable property includes the step of determining a scale ratio range for a member

of a target population represented in the evaluation and using the scale ratio range to determine adjustability of the property.

13. (ORIGINAL) A method as set forth in claim 8 including the step of determining whether to perform a new evaluation and performing a new evaluation if determined to perform a new evaluation.

14. (ORIGINAL) A method as set forth in claim 8 wherein said step of growing the virtual human includes the steps of:

assuming an initial posture by the evaluator;

digitally establishing locations of motion capture sensors positioned on the evaluator in the initial posture using a computer system;

creating a virtual human digitally to represent the evaluator using the digital motion capture sensor locations for the virtual human, the evaluator's measurements and the scale ratio;

aligning the virtual human with the evaluator, wherein the motion capture sensor locations on the virtual human are aligned with the motion capture sensor locations on the evaluator; and

checking that the motion of the virtual human mirrors the motion of the evaluator.

15. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method of subjective evaluation of a vehicle design within a virtual environment using virtual reality, said method comprising the steps of:

preparing an adjustable property to represent the vehicle design;

measuring the evaluator;

positioning a full-body motion capture system on an evaluator for sensing a motion of the evaluator and communicating the sensed motion of the evaluator to a computer system, so that the motion of the evaluator controls the motion of the virtual human in the virtual environment;

providing the evaluator with a virtual reality display mechanism operatively communicating with the computer system, for providing the evaluator a view of the virtual environment while evaluating the vehicle design

determining a scale ratio and range of a target population for the evaluator wherein the scale ratio is a ratio between a predetermined dimension of the evaluator and a predetermined dimension of a member of the target population;

adjusting the property using the scale ratio for the evaluator;

growing the virtual human in the virtual environment using the measurements of the evaluator and the scale ratio to virtually represent a scaled evaluator;

aligning the virtual human in the virtual environment to the evaluator and the property;

performing the evaluation of the vehicle design by the evaluator; and

using the evaluation of the vehicle design in the design of the vehicle.

16. (ORIGINAL) A method as set forth in claim 15, including the step of determining whether to perform a new evaluation and performing a new evaluation if determined to perform a new evaluation.

17. (ORIGINAL) A method as set forth in claim 16 including the step of determining whether to use a new evaluator and using a new evaluator if determined to use a new evaluator.

18. (ORIGINAL) A method as set forth in claim 17 including the step of determining whether to revise the scale ratio if determined not to use a new evaluator and revising the scale ratio if determined to revise the scale ratio.

19. (ORIGINAL) A method as set forth in claim 15 wherein said step of growing the virtual human includes the steps of:

assuming an initial posture by the evaluator;

digitally establishing locations of motion capture sensors positioned on the evaluator in the initial posture using a computer system;

creating a virtual human digitally using the motion capture sensor locations for the virtual human and the scaled measurements of the evaluator;

aligning the virtual human with the evaluator, wherein the motion capture sensor locations on the virtual human are aligned with the motion capture sensor locations on the evaluator; and

checking that the motion of the virtual human mirrors the motion of the evaluator.

20. (ORIGINAL) A method as set forth in claim 15, including the step of determining a scale ratio range for a member of a target population represented in the evaluation and using the scale ratio range to determine adjustability of the property.